

PATENT
Serial No. 09/529,257
Reply to Office Action of January 22, 2004

The combination of Johnson and Tamaru does not teach each and every element of the claim 1. Further, there is no suggestion or motivation provided to try such a combination. In fact, as explained above, a person of skill in the art would be discouraged from trying such a combination. Each of these are required for a proper obviousness rejection. See the *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure* (MPEP) § 706.02(j) (8th ed. August, 2001) (requiring both (i) a suggestion or motivation to modify a reference or combine reference teachings and (ii) a combination of references that teaches all of the claim limitations). As such, the obviousness rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Moreover, the combination of references does not teach that the end of the air-blowing pipe which is inserted in the branch pipe has an internal diameter of about 0.4D to 0.7D, as is recited in claim 4. Therefore, the obviousness rejection of claim 4 is improper and should also be withdrawn.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC § 103 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and prompt favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

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If there are any questions regarding this response or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 037083.48707).

Respectfully submitted,

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